



For Immediate Release

10 March 2021

PR 9895

Multi-million pound boost for projects to shape the future of the borough

Actions to work towards Basingstoke and Deane's ambitious climate change targets and to support a post-COVID economic recovery have been given a £2 million funding boost.

Helping to ensure Basingstoke and Deane remains a great place to live and work, an additional £1 million will support the council's work to tackle climate change and a further £1 million has been allocated to boost the borough's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, with both priorities working together to shape a green and prosperous borough.

As the pandemic hit the country in March 2020, the council quickly implemented measures to protect its budget and ensure it was well placed to respond to financial impacts such as a reduction in income and increased costs.

Due to the level of funding now allocated by the government in support of COVID-19 pressures on the council, it is possible to use the one-off council savings that have been achieved to provide further support for the priorities identified in the Council Plan 2020 to 2024.

Following extensive public consultation, the borough council has developed a Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy after councillors agreed that action must be taken to work towards making the council carbon-neutral by 2025 and Basingstoke and Deane a carbon neutral borough by 2030.

The additional funding will support work with partners to further develop and progress actions identified in the strategy, such as helping drive behaviour change, the rollout of electric vehicle charging points, electrifying the council's own fleet of vehicles and renewable energy and energy efficiency schemes.

In addition, the council, along with its partners, is taking an active role in planning for the borough's economic recovery coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic through the Economic Recovery Framework.

A further £1 million will help the council to accelerate the delivery of actions identified in the framework, support clean growth and inward investment and maximise opportunities for key borough projects such as the new Town Centre Strategy.

Leader of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Cllr Ken Rhatigan said: "The COVID-19 pandemic has been a difficult time for all across the borough but because of our early action to minimise the financial impact to the council's budget, we have been able to achieve one-off savings which we will be reinvesting into our services.

"I am pleased that we have been able to allocate a significant amount of funding to support these two initiatives which are key priorities for the council to ensure the borough remains a great place to live and work for the future.

"But we cannot do this alone and it will be vital for us to work closely with our partners to maximise our opportunities and ensure support is provided where it is needed most for the future."

ENDS

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